Green tip of the week: Reduce your impact on the environment through environmentally preferable purchasing.

Greening Government related goal: The Department of Personnel and Administration, in cooperation with the Department of Public Health and Environment shall develop purchasing policies for selecting environmentally preferable products.

Paper or Plastic? It's the question millions of people are asked everyday – "paper or plastic?" Which one is better for the environment?

Source: The Alliance for Climate Protection

Paper	Plastic
1 ton of bags = 17 trees	1 ton of bags = 11 barrels of crude oil
20% get recycled	1% get recycled
Ingredients: wood, petroleum, coal	Ingredients: natural gas, petroleum
Could biodegrade in as little as a month, but	Decompose in 5 to 1,000 years
due to poor landfill design actually	
decompose at about the same rate as plastic.	
Each bag leads to 5.75 pounds of air	Each bag results in 1.2 pounds of air
pollution	pollution, almost 80% less than paper.
Generates 5 times as much solid waste as	40% less energy to manufacture and 91%
plastic	less energy to recycle than paper
Due to bulk, it uses more fuel getting	Up to 3% of the world's plastic bags end up
trucked to the store	as free-floating litter.
The manufacturing process produces 50	Easily washes out to sea, where it clogs the
times more water pollution than plastic	stomachs of whales and turtles (and floats
	out of high-country Colorado landfills into
	the forest)

The answer? In this case, neither of these products is environmentally preferable to a bag made of reusable materials. BYOB – Bring your own bags!

The most environmentally-friendly product may be something other than what is presented to you. The State Environmentally Preferable Purchasing policy will review the environmental impacts of various commodities, and provide purchasers with the information they need to make good buying decisions.